

Search is on for better ways to work

February 05, 2015 11:00 AM Carol J. Schlueter
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Anne Baños, left, is co-chair of a universitywide committee that is searching for improvements and additional revenues as it reviews the ways Tulane operates. Baños is chief of staff and vice president for administrative services. Serving as co-chair with her is Tony Lorino, right, senior vice president for operations and chief financial officer. (Photos by Paula Burch-Celentano)

The spring semester brought a new set of tasks for 16 members of the Tulane University community. The group, representing administration, staff members, faculty and students, makes up the Operational Review Steering Committee, one of two groups working with consultants to solve an operating cash deficit that has affected the university's bottom line for a number of years.

President Mike Fitts announced the two-pronged program, each with its own committee for an operational review and a budget review in a [Jan. 13 message](#), identifying [Huron Education](#) as the consultants on the project, which will culminate in June.

“The goals of this initiative,” Fitts said in his message, “are twofold: To solidify our financial position by eliminating our annual operating cash deficit of \$15-20 million; and to develop a new budgeting system that is better suited for our future plans.”

Leading the Operational Review Steering Committee are co-chairs Anne Baños, chief of staff and vice president for administrative services, and Tony Lorino, senior vice president for operations and chief financial officer.

The university spends more cash than it has, Baños said, and that's “not a sustainable way to operate. We are trying to get better in the ways we handle our resources.”

The committee will identify ways to bring greater efficiencies and generate additional revenue, Baños said. It will focus on administrative operations, not academic programs.

Reviews such as this are common in higher education, Lorino said. “We want to identify every operating activity we can and see if there is a better way to do it.”

Lorino also serves on the Budget Redesign Steering Committee that is looking to improve the university's budgeting system.

“I'm very supportive of this process,” Lorino said, “and encouraging everyone to participate to their fullest extent. It's in our best interest to help Huron make this a success.”

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Tony Lorino, senior vice president for operations and chief financial officer